

General Plan Program Citizens' Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting #1 – June 9, 2003

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for the General Plan program held its first meeting on Monday, June 9, 2003 at 6:00 P.M. on the 7th floor of City Hall, in the Mayor's Ceremonial conference room. Attendees were as follows:

CAC Members

Surekha Acharya
Bill Blankenship
General Stan Brown
Finn Comer
Kimberly Davidson-Morgan
George Flower
Barry Johnson
Maureen Kane
Morgan Keith
David Leonard
David McNiel
Sally Silva
Kenneth Sutter
Mike Teer
Judy Teunissen

Those members of the CAC who were unable to attend informed Planning staff in advance of the meeting.

City Staff

Ken Gutierrez, Planning Director
Craig Aaron, Principal Planner
Diane Jenkins, AICP, Senior Planner
Patricia Brenes, Associate Planner
Herman Mukasa, AICP, Associate Planner
Wendell Bugtai, Planning Intern

Consultant Team

John Bridges, Cotton/Bridges/Associates
John Cook, Cotton/Bridges/Associates
Laura Stetson, Cotton/Bridges/Associates

The consultant team made a presentation describing the General Plan program and the role of the CAC in developing the General Plan, and provided an overview of the issues already identified as important to be addressed in the General Plan and zoning ordinance. The meeting was then opened up to CAC members to comment on the materials. The CAC offered the following comments:

- The General Plan program should not duplicate recent efforts to address housing in Downtown.
- Coordinate planning with Riverside County's General Plan Update process, including the RCIP, MSHCP, CETAP and design guidelines.
- Regional coordination is needed to address:
 - Air quality
 - Airports
 - Railroad crossings
- Are there any plans for annexation northwest of the City? This is a major source of traffic and an unattractive entrance to the City. (Planning Director Gutierrez explained that this area – Rubidoux – is outside of Riverside's sphere of influence, or SOI.)
- A transportation connection through the Cajalco corridor is critical.
- Can the CAC recommend that the City expand the SOI across I-215? This land has the potential industrial development that could meet economic goals. (Planning Director Gutierrez stated that this land could be within Perris's SOI. The CAC could make a recommendation to change SOI, but would be a confrontation with nearby cities could result.)
- What defines the sphere of influence?
(Planning Director Gutierrez explained the role of the Local Agency Formation Commission, or LAFCO. LAFCO makes decisions about sphere boundaries. The City of Riverside currently does not have LAFCO board representation. All SOIs will be updated by January, 2006.)
- The City needs to demonstrate that it has services to provide to land with annexation potential.
- Residential properties just outside of the City have become cost centers and use a lot of City services. Annexations may be too expensive to incorporate. The City may not be able to provide necessary services. "Be careful what you wish for."
- What infrastructure is needed to attract affluence to the City? Don't just address street s; health care also needs to be addressed.

- The City needs to readdress and reexamine Proposition R and Measure C regarding the greenbelt area.
- The City needs a good transition between Downtown and UCR to:
 - Addressing Eastside issues
 - Address housing and transportation as key factors

(Planning Director Gutierrez said that the University Community Plan will be incorporated into General Plan.)

- What is the status of the multimodal transit center bringing bus service closer to Metrolink?
(Planning Director Gutierrez stated that options are being investigated.)
- Regarding multifamily housing: try to reverse situations where great single-family houses have been carved up into flats. Restore the historic homes.
- Crime has actually gone up in past couple of years.
(The CAC was informed that the Police Department is investigating the precinct concept of better responding to crimes.)
- Planning Director Gutierrez stated that the General Plan will have a 20-year time frame and that financial decisions will be made from year to year as Plan is carried out.)
- Regarding distribution of community centers throughout the community: Arlanza is lacking such facilities.
- There is a real need to increase ownership across the board, not just for certain demographic groups.
- In response to a question about ownership, Principal Planner Craig Aaron mentioned that 54% of city's population owns homes, and 46% rent.
- Incentivize property maintenance.
- Facilitate home ownership.
- Regarding arts and culture:
 - A Downtown performing arts center has been an issue for 40+ years.
 - Riverside needs a bigger, nicer museum. Fairmont Park is one potential option; also consider other sites.
- The current museum building does not work for museum use.

- Riverside has very little art/culture in the west end of the City. La Sierra University and Cal Baptist are here. They offer potential to site a museum or other similar institution here.
- Address the need for senior services: housing, public safety, health care, transportation and more.
- Not much housing exists in Downtown, nor mixed-use development in other places.
- Arlanza/La Sierra/West End are areas that need basics like sidewalks and better streets.
- Since the subdivision standards being updated, can the City establish different standards for different portions of the community?
- Casa Blanca has used CDBG block grants for curbs/gutters/sidewalks; Arlanza has used money to address child care and other social needs. The community has input into block grant decisions and flexibility in spending this money.
- Develop a study for providing sidewalks. Come up with a standard that would limit the distance one would have to walk before reaching a sidewalk.
- In the Arlanza area the Planning Commission and Design Review Board see the lowest quality applications. Institutional facilities (a museum?) can lead the way toward improving development quality in the larger area.
- Where is the river in Riverside? Use the Santa Ana River creatively. Think about housing and a marina. A marina at Mt. Rubidoux was suggested many years ago.
- Create a hierarchy of signage. Can consistent locator signage reference arts institutions?
- Increase floor-area ratios near freeways. There may be an opportunity for a different job base in the west end.
- The County's RCIP uses a "community centers" concept, with opportunities to build centers around transit centers. The County is trying to incentivize this kind of development.
- How do we attract a highly educated work force? The Husing report said to make it easier to establish businesses here. The report also calls for new housing opportunities: there is a need for "executive housing" in Riverside.
- With regard to the lawsuit over March ARB: development is in limbo.

- Preservation of March's military mission is of utmost importance to Riversiders. The City has a unique military heritage that hasn't been fully recognized or capitalized upon. The military is part of City's culture, part of the soul of Riverside. Riverside County has 250,000 military retirees/veterans, most west of Banning. The Veterans' Administration has relinquished land at the cemetery for a VA homeless project.
- Flight paths into March: we need to plan very carefully in response. The skies are crowded, with the Ontario flight path close by.

At the close of the comment section, the CAC provided with a homework assignment: To review materials to be provided that distilled information from the 1994 General Plan and feedback received at prior General Plan meeting. These materials will be in the form of Objectives and Strategies.

The CAC was also directed to look at the General Plan website and to contact Diane Jenkins with questions.

Diane Jenkins email: dijenkins@ci.riverside.ca.us

Telephone: (909) 826-5625

The General Plan website includes schedules, minutes, agendas, facts, etc.